

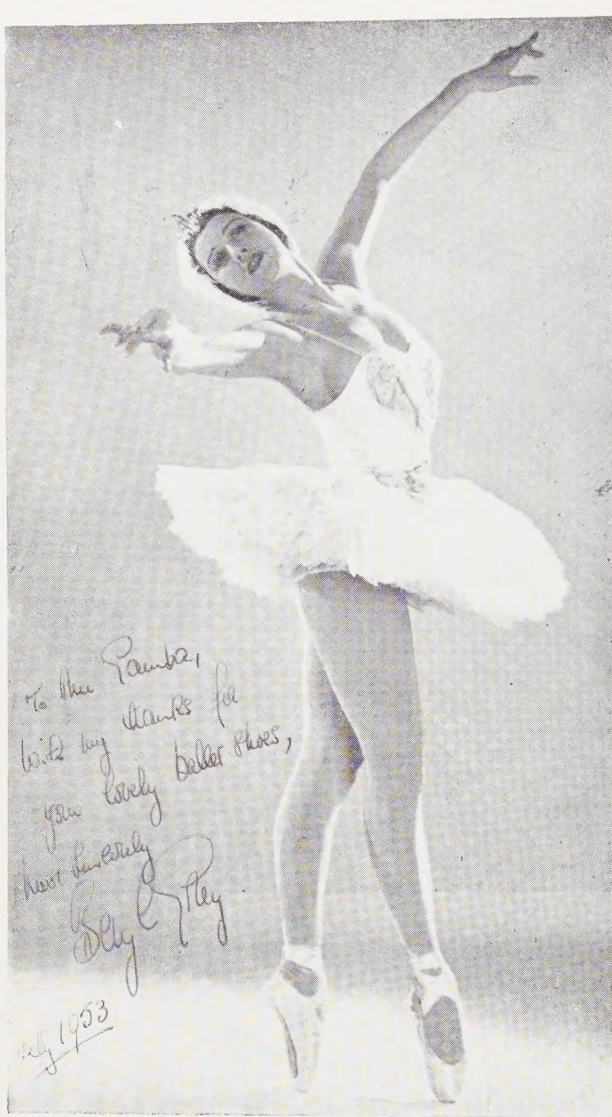
BALLET

Today



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OBSERVER

GAÎTÉ PARISIENNE

Offenbach orch. Manuel Rosenthal

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DAILY TELEGRAPH

ON

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THE NATIONAL DANCE MONTHLY

Managing Editor : B. G. HERSCHEL
Editor : PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND



MICHEL RENAULT IS, at 26, premier danseur étoile of the Paris Opera ballet.

He began studying at the Opera in 1939 under Serge Lifar and their partnership has remained firm as few do in ballet.

Preview..

I N thinking of chamber ballet it is, I think, first necessary to deter the too facile synonym of chamber with "small." A small group of dancers is no more the root of chamber ballet than a six-piece instrumental group playing dehydrated symphonies could be referred to as a chamber ensemble. A chamber ballet is a group of soloists dancing in ballets exclusively contrived for their especial talents. This we have, so far, not seen.

I have drawn the two points—chamber ballet and provincial tradition in ballet—together here because they are complementary. Complementary, that is, if we are to have a provincial tradition in Britain — chamber ballet is the only artistically and economically practicable answer.

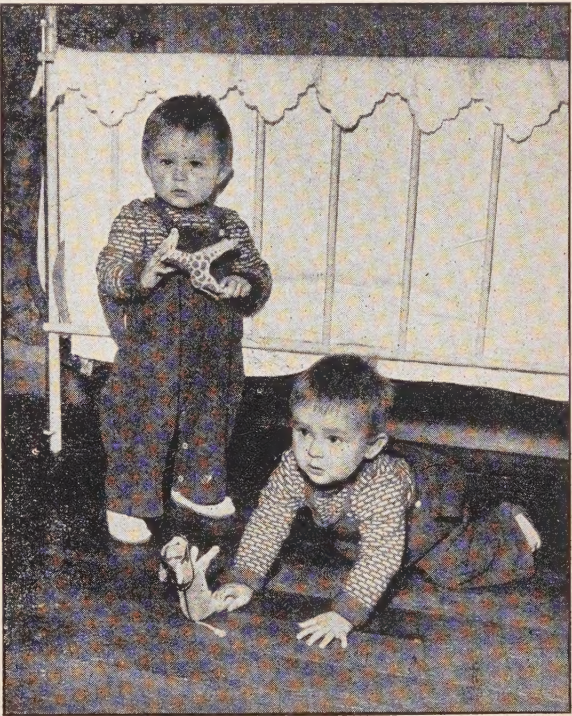
Obviously only London can provide the audience potential for such companies as Sadler's Wells and Festival Ballet for anything more than a few weeks.

FRUSTRATION

Such large companies can tour the provinces, as they do, but leave nothing in their wake but frustration for any young poten-

© GEORGE and ALEXANDER SKIBINE — aged 17 months and just photographed by Serge Lido

IS
CHAMBER
BALLET
THE
ANSWER?



tial talent in the cities visited. What is needed acutely here is a network of provincial companies built on small dimensions with a

minimum of overhead.

Small companies have gone out from London with little money and little hope of success. But these have tried in vain to perform major ballets under impossible conditions. The number of "digested" versions of LAC DE CYGNE, SLEEPING BEAUTY and other classics I have seen from these companies is innumerable and forgettable. By attempting the impossible these companies have poor works they attempted—and, more important, they failed new audiences all over the country who, "seeing ballet for the first time," decided it was poor fare.

There are proverbs in most languages about the big fish in the small pool or knowing one's limitations. Cliches as they are, they still have not reached the ears of ballet promoters.

The chamber ballet would know strictly to the tight rule of knowing its limitations—size, money,



© Dero's caricature of Serge Perrault, Violette Verdy, George Reich, Colette Marchand, Liliane Montevechi and Roland Petit which appeared in the French monthly TOUTE LA DANSE.

© One of the three dancers in the folkdance group mentioned here.



THE RUSSIANS

THE first visit of Soviet dancers to London has been agitatedly awaited here for a very long time. This year the visit took place.

Dulled somewhat by the political aspect of the visit, the dancers were nevertheless welcomed. On their first appearance — at the Scala — three dance items were programmed. Both the solo items were incredibly short but quite startling in technical ease.

Farmanyantz, a folk dancer of facile lightness, astounded the audience with three mighty "grand jete" of great elevation and suspension. Three folk dancers gave a typical Russian peasant dance at great speed — choreographers of the 'Three Ivans' and other similar

divertissement should first see an exhibition such as this!

Principal event of this first evening was the surprise appearance of Shatilov in a minute variation from *ESMERELDA*. Of great physique, but with a beautiful head, Shatilov has an unbelievable stage presence which found the Scala stage almost too small for his sweeps!

His variation used four leaps, each ending on a slide-fall on one knee. These were not only physically perfect but, despite the physical factor, Shatilov gave them a

musical exactness that had his slide on the beat each time.

I was personally more than impressed by this dancing and only frustrated in having such a tiny fragment of performance to see and judge upon.

The percussive range of a tambour peasant instrument—the Doira — gave added interest to the dance fragments on this programme. The use of this Doira was dexterous and of full showmanship, and at the same time a perfect 'beat' accompaniment to the dancers.

FULL PROGRAMME

Several days later, at Festival Hall (over 3,400 were present) Farmanyantz and Shatilov again appeared.

Farmanyantz danced several variations from Asafiev's *FLAMES OF PARIS* and from Puni's *BAYADERKI*. In these he had time to prove his technique on a sustained level.

Alla Shelest and Konstantin Shatilov appeared four times on the programme. Shelest is prima ballerina at the Leningrad Kirov Theatre and her roles include Juliet in Prokofiev's *ROMEO AND JULIET*, Odette/Odille in *LAC DE CYGNE* and the principal in Khachaturian's *GAYANEH*.

She has the strength of physical technique obvious in all these dancers, but, much more, a talent above technique which gives her a soft lyricism and gentle attack. She danced with Shatilov, to a single paino and against bare walls, as Juliet and managed to grip me with her conveyance of the role. Dancing and acting magnificently, Shelest has a span of stage dominance quite unexpected in such a slight dancer.

Shatilov partners well but did not sustain his technique on the level of his variations from *ESMERELDA*.

MODERNISED

The black swan pas de deux from *LAC* was a more theatrical conception than the one we are used to. The male choreography is more difficult and more effective and a degree of modern movement has been essayed by the choreographer which adds to the work.

Shelest danced two waltzes alone, a Strauss and a better one by Shostakovich, and performed several *ROMEO AND JULIET* variations which included a sharp top-of-shoulder lift which would not be used by the English choreographer for fear of its 'modernism.' Excellently contrived it fitted the ballet's emotional content.

To page twenty three



© JEAN BABILEE and — opposite — VIOLETTE VERDY, sketched by June Ryan.

Petit's B "REVUE" RA

THE first night of Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris' second London season—at the Stoll on November 30—introduced Jean Babilée in Petipa's L'OISEAU BLEU grand pas de deux and in Petit's usual role of the Wolf in LE LOUP. Babilée's dancing is superlatively good and yet his constant pose of modesty—allied to bizarre curtain jumps—becomes too obvious. He has become sadly mannered, a tragedy for such a fine male dancer.

In the Bluebird pas he looked perfect and gave it an execution of pent-up lightness, only his unceasing 'looking down' spoiling the effect. Violette Verdy—a corn-blond who dazzled in the pale blue of Karinska's costume—has height and breadth and a good classical approach but little thought. In LE LOUP she was as good as before and Babilée perhaps more animal than Petit himself. He missed the thoughtful sensuousness and sense of 'alone' that Petit brought to the role, however.

With Babilée it was a part—with Petit a moral.

★ THE DIAMONDS

Ending the evening London met LA CROQUEUSE DE DIAMANTS with Jose Ferran as the village idiot of a cafe proprietor and Italian discovery Liliane Montevercchi as the digester of diamonds.

There is everything in the overworked sets of this ballet but an expresso machine—but Wakhewitch has missed little else. His decors are wonderful. Petit's Young Man has even more looseness, casualness than before although now one is reminded of Gene Kelly's sailor-sway dancing.

Montevercchi, though, is the dancer worth watching. She makes a rougher diamond of the role—sensuously stiff, merely forcing her palm down her thigh for sex effect. Her voice is in the gravel-throated tradition of Bessie Smith and she brings to her theme song a surprisingly, slow-beat Jazz feeling.

Her dancing shows only in the slow pas de deux which unfortunately drags in this whistlestop ballet. In CROQUEUSE Petit



had only learned how to French polish—today he has added a glissing swiftiness. But this tale of cabbages and swing is witty theatre.

★ NEW BEAUTY

Roland Petit's joke at the expense of a classic—THE SLEEPING BEAUTY—deserves to come off better than it does. An under-rehearsed orchestra, a decor rather more literal than Petit's normal and a wasted amount of crowd scening—these hinder what could better be told in fantasy terms than in the strict bounds of melodrama.

Petit's mistake is to attempt drama inside the same technical capacity which he brings to comedy. In LE LOUP he rose far above this, in this new Sleeping Beauty he does not.

The Sleeping Beauty (Caron) is a fair-ground tightrope walker who is desired (as much for the business of using her in his sideshow as for personal want) by a "hit the bullseye and a lingered-lady rolls out of bed" stallkeeper. He (Perrault) causes her to fall, and become unconscious, hustles her into his sideshow bed and invites shy-shooters. Only the young attendant (Petit) scores a hit and has the Beauty roll out to him. He kisses her, she wakes from her unconsciousness. They glide off to paradise on the wings of the big dipper.



Ballet in Review
by PETER
CRAIG-RAYMOND

LATE BOOK REVIEW

Lido's Ballet

The third volume of Serge Lido's annual photographic reviews of ballet in France has just been published in Paris.

This volume again shows—page after page—the finished, polished work of an inventive, master cameraman. Lido's skill is wide as his scope—ballet—is narrow and well-studied.

For his cover Lido chose a half-shot of Renee Jeanmaire which captures much more of Renee's charm than the hackneyed ballet poses. Inside, the first portion is given to Roland Petit's LE LOUP after an introduction by Jean Cocteau. One of the book's full-colour reproductions is of a group from LE LOUP.

There are several fine male studies—Peter Van Dijk, Jean Babilée and Milorad Miskovitch for three. Of ballerinas Lido has chosen superb shots of Markova, Violette Verdy and Alicia Alonso. The group photographs—especially two with fine, fine lighting—are excellent.

I enjoyed the sight of this Lido volume more than many of the things represented in it... that is a final compliment to a photographer whose book needs no praise.
P.C.R.

Ballet Digest

Moira Shearer -

The New Hurok . . . Maul

★ BRIEFLY

Ballet's first 3D book is selling in New York . . . It is a text book of figures and terminology . . . The New York City Ballet's hometown season opens in January with the already-announced Balanchine full-length CASSE and a new work by Jerome Robbins . . . Gordon Craig and his relation to the imaginative theatre is the subject of the current CHRYSALIS, an American monograph periodical . . . Bunty Kelley, who scored her success in BRIGADOON, is now a soloist with the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre . . . Balanchine has written a volume of stories from the ballet which is being published by Doubleday . . . two Legat-school pupils are in the Drury Lane production of THE KING AND I: Jane Johnson and Gladys Allgood . . . Caryl Brahms had a rather lovely little 'child thoughts' verse in the December WOMAN AND HOME . . . and not a ballet child, either.

● NEW BALLET IN SPAIN

Pilar Llorens, now introducing R.A.D. teaching in her native Barcelona, is also connected with a new, small company of young dancers being formed there.

The style of work is described as demi-character dancing with classic ballet and popular dance incisions. In the group's first programme a Louis XIV dance, a Negro spiritual and African drum dance, a Brazilian item and a circus ballet were presented together. Main principal: Nothing to do with Swan Lakes!

The first performance was given on January 3 to be followed by a repeat in Madrid and a second show in Barcelona. A report on these programmes will be published in the next issue of BALLET TODAY.

● AGAIN?

Will Moira Shearer play yet another dramatic ballerina film role? If George Minter's 1954 plans for DANCE LITTLE LADY come off . . . the answer is yes, she might.

● ENCORE

Sol Hurok, who wrote IMPRESARIO in 1945, brings his memoirs up to date with S. HUOK PRESENTS which has just been published in New York.

© AURORA PONS in the new Spanish Film EL DUENDE JEREX.

● THANK YOU

The Honorary Secretary of the London Archives of the Dance acknowledges with grateful thanks three most generous anonymous parcels of bound volumes of programmes, BALLET and BALLET TODAY, which form a most welcome addition to the collection of the Archives.

● BALLET BROTHER

Kelly Brown, formerly of New York's Ballet Theatre, has been signed by M-G-M for one of seven male roles in their musical, SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS.

Brown will make his screen debut in the production starring Jane Powell and Howard Keel. Stanley Donen is to direct the picture with Jack Cummings as producer.

Brown recently returned to the United States from a tour of Europe with Ballet Theatre.

● QUOTE

"Since Dicky Buckle only writes for the OBSERVER—but does not edit or publish it—there is the assurance that his articles will appear for a long time to come." Anatole Chujoy reviewing Richard Buckle's ADVENTURES OF A BALLET CRITIC in the New York DANCE NEWS.

● BARCELONA

The 1953-4 Opera-Ballet season has started in Barcelona with TRAVIATA, GIACONDA and AIDA, all with ballet especially choreographed for this season. The only male dancer now is Magrina, and Aurora Pons is again principal dancer.

Dolores Meredia, 21-years-old soloist with Perez-Fernandez' Latin American Ballet, is now resting in Barcelona.

● SCOTS ANCESTRY

Michael Maule, brilliant young dancing star with the New York City Ballet and Ballet Theatre, has been signed to make his motion picture debut in BRIGADOON, starring Gene Kelly and Cyd Charisse. Vicente Minnelli is to direct and Arthur Freed will produce the new musical, based on the Broadway stage hit.

Born in South Africa, Maule is of Scottish parentage, which makes him an ideal choice for the musical which has for its colourful setting the mythical Highlands village of Brigadoon.



Ballerina in another film

Brigadoon . . . Lichine Ballet for Europe

TATIANA CHAMIE

Teacher and choreographer Tatiana Chamie died during November in New York. Born in Odessa she joined Diaghilev and became a soloist with him, moving to de Basil for nine years in Monte Carlo on Diaghilev's death. In 1938 M. Chamie joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and remained with this group until 1944 when she opened a school in New York. She recently choreographed several ballets for the resuscitated Monte Carlo group.

LOST VEGAS

Gambling readers whose instincts are aroused only under the stimuli of ballet identification are, perhaps, salvaged from their loss on "Ballet" (in the Cesaire-itch) by fluttering on the Hungarians in the recent football game. Abetted by Kovach and Rabovsky's example I bet the princely sum of 2/6 and—woe to English sportsmanship—the Englishman who took my bet has not once appeared to give settlement!

BAD TOAST

Favourite American television show TOAST OF THE TOWN (CBS-TV) struck wrong note when compere Ed Sullivan introduced Rabovsky with long paeans to 'today's Nijinski' and ended—the girl is just charming." A rather false impression of Kovach's worth; unintentional, but needless. First reviews reported little interest in straight passages . . . brilliant leaps, turns . . . good commercial sense."

GROSS GOOD

Sadler's Wells parent company continues to play to record-breaking business with a 130,000-dollar week in Washington, D.C., just reported. Other ballet tours, however, are not recording anything near the wonderful receipts of the Wells. Money is tight—but where there's a Wells there's a way?

KIDD'S NEXT

Michael Kidd will choreograph stage adaptation of the great Greta Garbo film NINOTCHKA. Under a new title the musical—with Don Ameche and Hildegard Jeff—reaches Broadway in August.

RALOV BALLET

A new ballet by Borge Ralov will be premiered next May by the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen. Negotiations are proceed-



"Rosario Hudson recently rented a display case on one of Birmingham's main Railway Stations. This photo shows one of the figures displayed—none of which are more than six inches high—with the exception of two models lying down, with a kitten in front. These, which are both in the likeness of Alexandra Danilova, are three feet high, and were mentioned in an article she wrote for the issue of BALLET TODAY in June, 1952." (See also page 23).



ing for the company's return to London this Autumn.

LICHINE FOR EUROPE

Contrary to expectations David Lichine's plans have concreted and his BALLET DE LA FILLE DES ANGES (incredible subtitle for Los Angeles Ballet) will debut on January 9 at Cannes. Riabouchinska, Lichine's wife, is ballerina. Parents of various corps dancers in group are underwriting part of the cost.

U.S. IN TOKYO

Paul Szilard has choreographed NIGHT FRIGHT for Nora Kaye and the Komaki Ballet in Tokyo. The first full GISELLE seen in Japan was presented on the same programme. A psychological, dramatic ballet, NIGHT FRIGHT is decreed by WONDERFUL TOWN-dancer Marta Becket. The plot is of a too busy business man who leaves his wife bored and sex-starved. An original plot for a ballet. The corps work of the Komaki Ballet is very poor and their dressing bad.

ESMERALDA

Anton Dolin is to stage the Perrot ballet ESMERALDA dur-

ing his summer Festival Hall season. Nicolas Beriosoff, of course, will recreate the work which was danced last in London over a hundred years ago. Grisi and Elssler danced the role of ESMERALDA in their time.

MODERN DANCE

An initial programme to launch a Contemporary Dance Theatre Centre to draw together the many scattered Modern Dancers at certain times when they can co-operate with other contemporary artists and show their work, will be shown at Toynbee Hall Theatre at 7.30 p.m. on January 4th.

ON DESIGN

Honor Frost will speak on stage designing to the London Ballet Circle on Sunday, January 17th, at 3 p.m., at the Salle Erard, 13, Great Marlborough Street, W.1. Non-members are welcome.

WRONG LINES

We apologise for two errors in the December issue. The telephone number of Hilde Holger's School of Modern Ballet is, of course, GULLIVER 6822 and that of Losely Hurst Publishing Company is Elmbridge 9743.

The Jacobean Masque and INIGO JONES

INIGO Jones has secured such a distinguished place in the history of British Architecture that the fact is sometimes lost sight of that he excelled in at least one other artistic field. A similar position could arise today if say, Sir Giles Scott or some other well known architect had secured his first artistic recognition as designer for the Sadler's Wells Ballet. It was Inigo Jones who first introduced the Palladian style of architecture into this country and amongst the many important works on which he was engaged was that of the old Cathedral of St. Paul's which had been allowed to fall into great decay. Jones, however, had first come into prominence when

he was the designer of the scenery and the costumes for the elaborate masques which were such a feature at the Court of James the First. Masques had been introduced into this country first by Henry the Eighth from Italy.

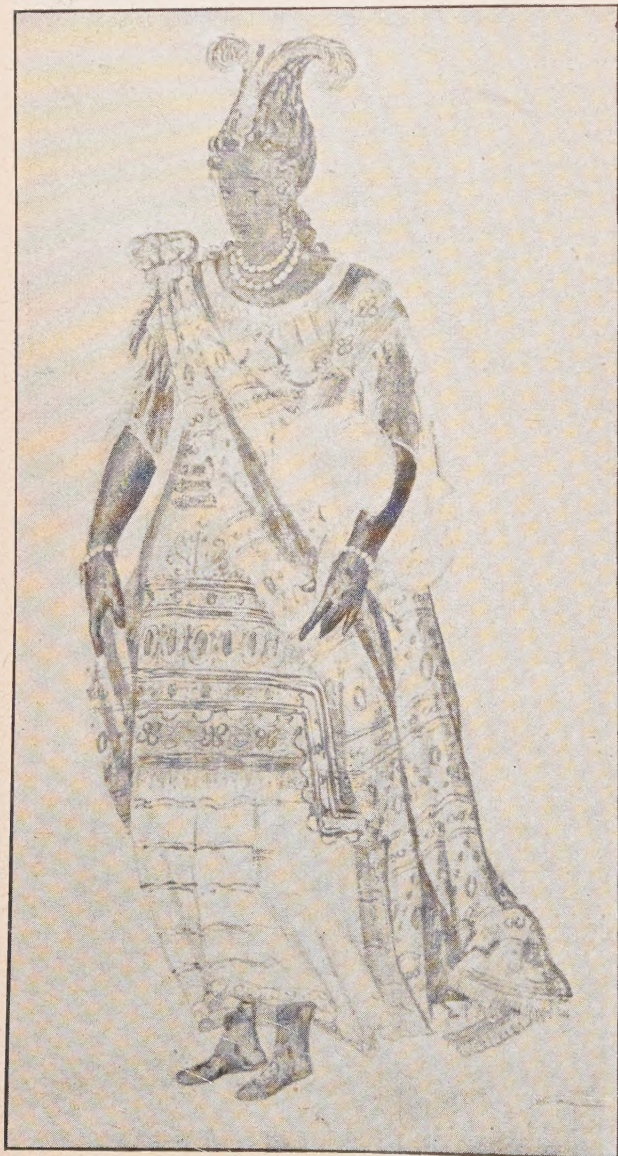
By the time that his daughter Queen Elizabeth came to the throne although the Masque still existed in its original form, the equivalent of the modern social 'rag' as is evidenced in several of Shakespeare's plays, it had also developed into a very ornate and elaborate spectacle which eventually became one of the essentials of all court festivities. It is from the Court Masques that the modern English Ballet has been evolved in very large measure. These masques also had had an important influence, not always to the good, on the dramatic writings of the period. Many prominent playwrights including Shakespeare introduced them into their scripts.

In the reign of James the First, the Masque reached a higher level of artistic excellence than it had attained previously. Mainly, this was due to the fact that Inigo Jones was responsible for the design of the scenery and the costumes for many of the productions. Jones also evolved cunning mechanism to effect the changes of scenery which had not been used in England previously. In the early years he was helped considerably in securing a perfect ensemble by the work of the dramatist Ben Johnson, who first gave the masque a literary form which it had never possessed previously.

Inigo Jones was born at West Smithfield, in the City of London, in 1573, being the son of an impoverished cloth worker, who on several occasions was involved in serious financial difficulties. This fact alone explains why young Inigo never went to the University and why both his writing and spelling present such difficulties. When he first left school, the lad was apprenticed to a joiner in St. Paul's Churchyard, but very soon revealed his gifts as a designer and as a draughtsman. His early essays as a landscape painter also evolved high praise from his contemporaries. In the days in which Inigo Jones lived, the only course for those desiring to follow an artistic career was to secure a patron. Jones was very lucky in being brought to the notice of William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, who provided the necessary funds for him to study in Italy.

At a later date Inigo was also assisted financially by Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel. It is known that the young artist spent a considerable time in Venice. It was undoubtedly the knowledge that Inigo Jones acquired in Italy which enabled him to carry out with suc-

to page nineteen



★

A
typical
Inigo
Jones
design

THE Ballet Theatre's new production based on the celebrated Ernest Hemingway story of bullfighters in Madrid, **THE CAPITOL OF THE WORLD**, had its first showing on the Ford Foundation TV Workshop's Omnibus programme Sunday afternoon, December 6th. The programme goes out over the entire CBS network with an estimated 18,000,000 viewers.

The ballet had its stage premiere at the Metropolitan Opera House on Sunday evening, December 27th, on the occasion of The Ballet Theatre's Gala Benefit to raise funds in celebration of the company's fifteenth anniversary next fall.

The work was commissioned by Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith, co-directors of Ballet Theatre, and represents months of collaboration for Eugene Loring, George Antheil and Esteban Frances, its choreographer, composer, and designer, respectively. For the Omnibus performance, the scenery has been designed by Henry May.

Leading roles were danced by Roy Fitzell, Lupe Serrano and Scott Douglas. Fitzell and Serrano are new additions to the company.

Ballet Theatre, like the Metropolitan Opera Association and other cultural organization in the U.S., is appealing to the general public for assistance. It asks for

● ALICIA MARKOVA



contributions to total \$200,000 to enable it to carry out a production programme planned in celebration of the company's 15th anniversary in the Fall of 1954. This is the first public appeal that The Ballet Theatre has made in its 14 years of continuous activity. Members of the Foundation have, and are, giving generously, but these contributions are insufficient to insure

the company's security as a permanent institution. It seems that we Americans have plenty of taxpayers' money for Congressional investigations but little to keep even a minimum of art alive.

Balanchine has planned the production of **CASSE NOISETTE** to run approximately one and three-quarter hours. The ballet will use the music exactly as Tchaikowski wrote it, neither cutting any of it nor adding variations written by anyone else. At the present it looks as if Balanchine's **CASSE** will be choreographically new. No one has breathed the word 'reconstruction' anywhere abouts.

The new **CASSE** will be in two acts encompassing four tableaux with only one intermission. The production will take 150 new costumes which are being designed and executed by Karinska. Decor is to be by Horace Armistead. The entire company will be necessary for the new production but, as yet, no leads have been named.

ALICIA MARKOVA has been engaged to appear at the Metropolitan again on January 23. This does not mean that Opera Director Rudolf Bing is toying with the idea of a ballet company for the Met. However, it may very possibly mean that this action will be a door opener for invitations to be given in the future to other principal dancers.

CERAMICS OF AUDREY BLACKMAN

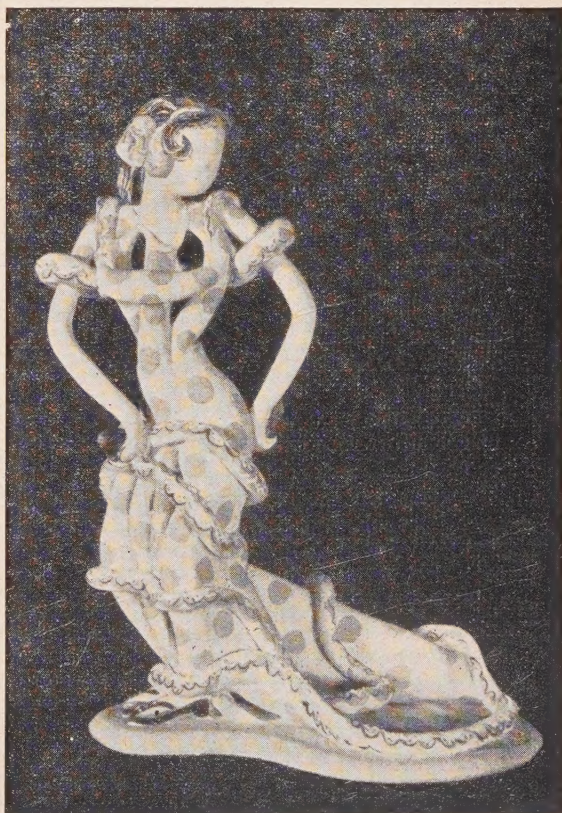
AUDREY BLACKMAN presented her terracotta and pottery figurines at an exhibition in the Berkeley Galleries, London, during December.

Amongst them were some very interesting and attractive models of dancers. No resemblance to any particular artist is inferred and no faces are shown; the form, rhythm and emotional effect of these little figurines is the problem—and the success—of their creator.

Their delicacy is no less remarkable, for they are formed in clay, which is glazed in pastels. Each figurine, including the non-dancing subjects, has a startling individuality with a common factor of a feeling for the beauty of movement primarily and resulting as a group, in showing a pleasant 20th century aspect.

What is most astounding, however, to the most conservative ballet-lover, is that these can be truly aesthetically pleasing in the home, being neither pure museum pieces nor the fair-ground favourites of suburbia.

SUSAN LESTER



It is generally accepted that the place of décor in ballet is that of an equal partner in the trilogy of choreography, décor and music. More often than not one of the three has taken precedence over the others; rarely have the three combined to make a perfect whole.

The décor for the Massine-Wagner-Dali: *TRISTAN FOU* was so overwhelming in its colour, form and dream associations that the other partners in the ballet became of lilliputian proportions. On the other hand, Balanchine's *FOUR TEMPERAMENTS*, callisthenic and heavy, might have become a more effective and expressive work with appropriate and evocative settings.

It is easy to recognise the perfect fusion when it occurs, for the impact is remarkable and entirely satisfying; to disassociate the music from the choreography or either from the background is practically impossible. Examples that readily spring to mind are: *PETROUCHKA* (Fokine, Stravinsky, Benois) and *LA FETE ETRANGE* (Howard, Fauré, Fedorovitch).

FRENCH CREDIT

French ballet naturally has a very large number of lovely and stimulating décors to its credit.

To enumerate all those we have seen in this country since the war that are worth remembering would make a long list. The reason for the artistic success of French work in this field perhaps lies in the artists' realisation or instinct that the combination of realism and fantasy can best be expressed through pictures, and the impression made on the sensitive mind by the intrusion of fantasy into everyday life is very great indeed.

The French also appreciate the



power of suggestion. The work of Bérard and Clavé is well known; both rely upon suggestion and colour for their effects. Bérard set a scene with deft and suggestive touches as in the bleak austerity of his set for *LA RENCONTRE* and the sumptuous impression of fairyland royalty of his *CLOCK SYMPHONY* designs, and left the rest of the decoration to be filled in by the action. Clavé does little more than build up associations in still life and leave the rest to the lighting.

Respect for the trilogy in French décor is often achieved by sheer evocative power. In *DEUIL EN 24 HEURES* (Petit, Thiriet, Clavé, for instance, in the scene outside the café, it is difficult to decide which of the three partners is responsible for the nostalgic, gay, mysterious and exciting effect of this tiny scene.

In America ballet's third partner is often not allowed a place at all and very few works can sustain interest for long by mere dance patterns. Such a ballet is not a stage picture and wilfully, as it were, one of its limbs is lopped off.

Where a décor is allowed it is often treated in a rather perfunctory manner. A large number of ballets have to be content merely with backcloth and wings of suitable colour and texture, well out of the way of the dancers.

Two exceptions are: *FALL RIVER LEGEND* (De Mille, Gould, Smith), where the décor, consisting chiefly of one reversible set up stage, actually appears to take part in the action, and *THE AGE OF ANXIETY* (Robbins, Bernstein, Smith), where the scene is depicted on a backcloth resembling a cinema screen.

Very few American ballets have achieved fusion. *FANCY FREE* (Robbins, Bernstein, Smith) is one of these. It is interesting to note that Oliver Smith was responsible for the décor of these three works.

AT HOME

In England, perhaps the main characteristic is too heavy a reliance on the literary tradition as in the work of Lancaster, Chappell, and perhaps Stevenson, and a banal use of lighting.

Although Piper and Hurry, for example, are somewhat outside this tradition, they seem too concerned with the texture and meaning of their painting seen in isolation to be completely successful as artists of the theatre. Probably the most notable theatre artist in this country was Fedorovitch, a Russian.

Her use of stimulating line and delicate colour was perhaps her greatest contribution to the décor of today. Her sad, misty park for *LA FETE ETRANGE* and the calm, cool, ethereal lines of her backcloth for *SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS* are excellent examples.

There is no need for America to learn from anyone.

American artists have the technique and the pioneering imagination to create effective décor in their own metier if they wish. The ephemeral nature of modern French choreography perhaps asks for ephemeral décor and no doubt a change in the one will be shadowed by a corresponding change in the other.

In England, more and more artists seem to be turning to the theatre as a means of expression and it is possible that an original and vital English décor style will evolve.

On the other hand, perhaps its strength will lie in English versatility, so long as the importance of the trilogy of choreography, décor and music continues to be realised.

JAY NORMAN

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Immense Markova Success

by Ferdinand
REYNA

with de Cuevas

THE Marquis de Cuevas Ballet continues its triumphant season at the Theatre de l'Empire, which is packed nearly every night. Keeping rigidly to clear-cut classical lines, the corps de ballet has practically achieved perfection. **Marjorie Tallchief** has gained in 'expression,' and in the tragic ending of the **PRISONNIER DU CAUCASE** she is strikingly outstanding. Much pleasure was derived from **ANNABEL LEE** in which she danced the grand pas de deux. The choreography by **George Skibine**.

★ ★ ★

ALICIA MARKOVA, our guest artist during this de Cuevas Season, has had an immense success, unanimously incontestable. She appeared in the **PAS DE QUATRE**, with **Rosella Hightower**, **Jacqueline Moreau** and **Denise Bourgeois**. In **GISELLE** the second act was interrupted several times by the frantic ovations of the audience. She was admirably upheld by **Skibine** as the Prince, and **Rosella Hightower** as the Queen. In **SYLPHIDES** Markova was stunning. Forthcoming ballets with the de Cuevas Company are **LA SYLPHIDE** (choreography by **Bournonville**) directed by **Harold Lander** and **FEUX ROUGES-FEUX VERTS** by **Bertrand Castelli**.



© DAPHNE DALE and OLEG BRIAN-SKY in the Quixote pas de deux on television during November.

WITH the strike ended, the traditional opening of the Opera Ballet took its usual place in style. **Serge Lifar's** most recent compositions were presented: **ETUDES**, **MIRAGES**, and **VARIATIONS**. A new version of **L'OISEAU DE FEU**, is in preparation. Choreographer **Serge Lifar**, with **Nina Vyroubova** and **Youli Algaroff**. **Jean Paul Andreani**, who was the Opera's principal dancer, has now become the principal star, and **J. Franchetti** is now the principal dancer.

★ ★ ★

CECCHETTI'S son, **Grazioso**, intends opening a School of Dance in Paris. He is quite an astonishing personality. Born in St. Petersburg, he knew **Marius Petipa** in his childhood, and saw **Mathilde Ksechinska**, **Preobajenska** and **Igorova** dance at the old Theatre Imperial. He has met them again in Paris after a lapse of many years. His brother, **Riccardo**, now dead, was an intimate friend of **Vaslav** and **Bronislava Nijinska**. **Grazioso** recounts many interesting events of these great days including his father's friendship with **Diaghilev**.

★ ★ ★

FRANCOISE REISS, the Paris critic, has just published her book "Sur la pointe des pieds" (Points) which gives accounts of last season's dance events in Paris. This is her second volume of this work. It has an attractive coloured cover of **LE LOUP** designed by **Garzou**, and contains many photographs. A book worth recommending as a documentary on Paris news.

★ ★ ★

THE Pakistan Ballet appeared at the Theatre de Paris. This ballet broke with tradition, and did not give any of the usual religious dances, but they were very moving in their character dances, the costumes were colourful, and local tradition was well defined in such dances as **The Harvest**, **The Spring**, **Fishing**, etc.

Without striking stage effects, or ultra-brilliant costumes, the Pakistan Dancers left an excellent impression, most particularly in one ballet which depicted the extreme miserable conditions of their country, with its drug-traffickers, famine, and the cruelty of the human race.



© A new Serge Lido shot of SERGE COLOVINE.

The Violetta Elvin I Know

by PIGEON CROWLE



THE Lilac Fairy and her companions must have been at the christening of Violetta Prokhorova to endow her with all the gifts necessary for a future ballerina: a musical ear, a sensitive spirit, beauty and personality, and the right kind of parents. Her father, Vassili Prokhorov, an engineer and a pioneer in aviation, was vital and creative. Her mother, a Polish artist, was a woman of much sensibility and understanding. Both parents were lovers of poetry, opera and ballet, and the little Violetta with dark, wondering eyes and curled hair was frequently taken to concerts and art galleries at an age when most children have only been to their first pantomime. She paid her first visit to the ballet when she was six.

"It was a most vivid experience," said Violetta, settling back in her armchair, and letting her thoughts slip back through the years, "and made a deep impression on me. *THE SLEEPING PRINCESS* is one of the most glittering and spectacular ballets in the Bolshoi repertoire, and for me it was wonder-land. For three days I lived in a dream, and began to spend much time composing little dances in which my dolls took part. Of course, I went to dancing classes, but they were of the eurythmic kind and I greatly envied a friend, older than myself, who had just started at the Bolshoi Ballet School. She used to tell me all about her lessons and her teachers, and sometimes she let me try on her ballet shoes, though they were far too big for me and I had to pull them on over my own shoes. I was eight and a half when my mother took me, one of five hundred candidates, for an audition at the Bolshoi. Oddly enough, I do not remember much about it. I went through the usual tests—for physical fitness, intelligence, aptitude, response to music and so forth, and was one of the fifty boys and girls who passed; but I do remember the crowd of excited, chattering children, and the girl who asked me to show how well I could point my toe."

JEALOUSLY GUARDED

When Violetta looks back on her years at the School, she sees again the wide, quiet corridors hung with pictures of famous dancers; the large class-rooms with their tall windows, letting in the sun and air; the whole effect of light and spaciousness—white paint everywhere and students in pastel-coloured tunics—nothing dark or sombre; and here the old traditions of ballet were jealously guarded. She is very grateful for those nine years that laid the foundation of her success. At this time ballet training was being standardised throughout Russia, and there was an exchange of professors between the great schools of Leningrad and Moscow. The former was noted for its pure, flowing style; the latter for the vitality and brio of its dancers. Violetta Prokhorova's teachers included the daughter of the famous Pavel Gerdt, Agrippina Vaganova, and Simonov, principal of the Leningrad School. In this way she enjoyed the best of two worlds, and the result is seen in her authority and style, her warm intensity, her proudly arched back and melting arms.

Please turn now to page seventeen



SADLER'S Wells Theatre Ballet dancer Pirmin Trecu danced Roberto Ximenez' **PUERTA DE TIERRA** at S.W. Theatre on December 11. Sadly, Ximenez choreography hardly swelled the stage as the Albeniz music very truly did. The orchestra was in fine condition and this Albeniz bolero received a full-sounding performance.

Ximenez tried the so far-impossible compromise between Spanish bite and classic ballet's gentle billowing. The soft but sticky body of a Cecchetti-trained dancer do not easily backsnap into folk Spanish.

BODY SAP

The body sap of a ballet dancer is not harsh enough, the body not tightly coiled enough for Spanish dance. The essence of Spanish dance is not in its effects only but in the hold and break of the body forcing the effects.

Few classically trained dancers can achieve this ferality. It is, perhaps, unhappy that they should try.

Within these preobvious limits, Pirmin Trecu danced well and with a certain amount of stage flourish that roused the audience to an ovation for him.

PUERTA DE TIERRA

TWO MORE

End notes: **VALES NOBLES** becomes more trite with every viewing—not helped by the sad laundering of the skirts on this

evening. **ILE DES SIRENES** has a fevered fortress in Maryon Lane and Donald Britton pleased. I am unhappy about the lighting but Sainthill's decor lives up well.

Cinedance

Poor Ballerina Again

POOR LITTLE BALLERINA, Memnon's twice-previously-shown film showcase for Violette Verdy is aptly titled. **Poor Ballerina** indeed.

That the valuable cineclassic-presenting Everyman Theatre in Hampstead should have chosen this as their season's only balletic entry is unfortunate — the theatre club's usual fare is of such high order.

NO RETURN

POOR LITTLE BALLERINA suffers from reaching a fantasy point of no return. The director has become so absorbed by his psychic wanderlust that he has forgotten compatability. When he is

dragged down to plot by the fixative of having to finish the film the contrivance is laughable.

Choreographically there is just as little interest. A pity that a several-talented effort should have bogged down so easily, so fully.

Verdy tells me she has made another short film this year with Serge Perrault and I am trying to discover this at the moment.

Late Book Review—

Dolin's Markova

MARKOVA: HER LIFE and ART by Anton Dolin (W. H. Allen, 17/6).

Markova is one of the greatest and most international of all ballerinas. British-born, she began her career in Diaghilev's company, where she absorbed the Russian tradition and studied under such famous masters as Cecchetti and Legat.

On the death of the great man, she returned to the English scene, dancing the great roles and creating many new ones in the years that saw the birth of ballet in this country and her own fulfilment as an artist of rare and special qualities.

Markova is part of ballet history, and though her biographer is inclined to cast himself for the role of Pygmalion, he writes with much warmth and pride and from the unique vantage position of a ballet partnership that has never been equalled.

P.C.

Two Features

BALLET TOMORROW has been held over until next month, as has the first edition of **"IN BALLET TODAY"** — the dancer's "Who's Who."



© Pupils of the Aida Foster School with the Pavlova statue in the background—on Hampstead Heath.

Books

Reviewed by Pigeon Crowle

Roland Petit

by Peter Craig-Raymond (Losely Hurst Publishing, 5/-).

It is surprising that no one has written a book on Roland Petit before this for he is one of the most loved and original choreographers of our day.

One still remembers the impact of his work on a war-weary audience in the scarred London by LES BALLET DES CHAMPS-ELYSEES in 1946 and after—the invention, the wit and sophistication of the ballets, the vigour of *joie de vivre* of its youthful dancers. The company was led by Roland Petit, maitre de ballet and chief choreographer, who shared the artistic direction with Boris Kochno, and his individuality and feeling for style produced widely differing masterpieces as *LES FORAINS* and *LE JEUNE HOMME ET LE MORTE*. The collaboration between choreographer and painter was reminiscent of the best days of Diaghilev. In 1950 Petit formed his own company, LES BALLETS DE PARIS, in which the startling and brilliant CAROLYN further emphasised his showmanship and sense of the theatre. Sometimes the showman was stronger than the artist.

This book is an excellent souvenir of the company that has been recently filling the Stoll. In it Peter Craig-Raymond chronicles the career of the company, its goals, and assesses the work of Roland Petit; there is a section devoted to the dancers in his company; another to the ballets. The photographs are many and striking and will recall many of the personalities and high-lights of the ballets.

Mr. Craig-Raymond ends with a chapter for more unconventional "theatre," and less commonplace "niceness" in English ballet, holding up LES BALLETS DE PARIS as a shining example of continued entertaining excitement. But when excitement is continuous it begins to pall and ceases to be entertaining—as Diaghilev discovered, though not quite on enough. True, it was in cold blood and without belief that Diaghilev sought eventually, for his succession of novelties and sensations; with Petit they evolve spontaneously; it is there difference ends. Petit, like

To page twenty-one



© From "TALES FROM THE BALLET" reviewed below

—and Pigeon Crowle's latest book reviewed by the Editor

Tales From The Ballet

by PIGEON CROWLE
(Faber: 12/6)

THIS beautifully produced little book is interestingly built by the author who uses a prologue to lead into her recounting the plots of several standard classics plus APPARITIONS and PINEAPPLE POLL.

Rather poorly served by her illustrator—who leans to a somewhat outdated technique in line drawing—Pigeon Crowle's word-

pictures of the ballets are extremely good. For the young person she captures mood and carries the story very well. She has an engaging sense of fitness for her reader and obviously knows the young mind.

The stories recounted, apart from the two I have mentioned, are LAC, SYLPHIDES, COPPELIA, CARNAVAL, BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE, GISELLE and SLEEPING BEAUTY.

A very good present for the young balletgoer.



By
Edith
Barking

Anette Fairley writes: Can you tell me of a ballet club near to my home—Nottingham?

There is, in fact, a ballet club in Nottingham itself. The secretary, M. E. Nevin, 136 Musters Road, W. Bridgford, Nottingham, will gladly give you details. Will other readers note that **BALLET TODAY** can send you a complete list of British ballet clubs if you send a stamped, addressed envelope marked 'Club Addresses.'

F.B.T. writes: BALLET TODAY has several times referred to a magazine called VARIETY. What is this?

VARIETY is the weekly (there is a daily version, too) newspaper of international professional entertainment covering the whole field of theatre, cinema, radio and television. It is published in New York and Hollywood and referred to throughout the world as the 'bible' of show business.

Jane Lason writes: Are the photographs which appear in BALLET TODAY for sale?

Mostly—I am afraid—no. But a few are. We have had numerous

requests for the Pavlowa photograph on page three of the November issue but, unfortunately, the copyright owner has placed a cost of 10/6 on prints which several enquirers have found excessive. The shot is of unique historical interest. Requests for photographic prints are welcomed however.

Ferd Langley writes: Can you tell me something about Daphne Dale who danced on television recently?

Yes, indeed. Daphne is with the Festival Ballet of Anton Dolin. She is 21 and was born in Kenya. Her principle role is the lead in Ruth Page's **VILLIA** ballet for Festival.

Jaqueline Mora writes: What happened to Sonia Arova?

Since Sonia's break with Festival Ballet she has been studying in Paris but was recently "confirmed" as joining the Borovansky Ballet in Australia. This "confirmation" was premature although the Borovansky contract is still open. Also in the air is a series of concert appearances here. Her principle worry in this case would be a suitable partner. But I doubt if she will long be out of the active list.

— and a reader with something to say, not ask, finishes the page . . .

WITH reference to Item No. 4 in Ballet Digest, in November issue of **BALLET TODAY**. I should like to speak on behalf of many fortunate Scottish ballet-lovers who were present at the American Ballet, Sadler's Wells, and Pilar Lopez performances: we could not have asked for better.

Before the press write a poor criticism on ballet in this country (festival or otherwise) let them remember that we, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, are ballet-starved, much as we appreciate the first class companies on their annual visit, we don't mind our hunger being appeased by

"second-best". Let me assure a warm welcome to all three companies mentioned above, especially to Pilar Lopez, who danced to packed houses, and whose audience rose to their feet, applauding and stamping and demanding curtain call after curtain call.

Thank you for your magazine, it becomes more and more interesting each month, and brings the best of ballet to many of its friends "north of the border".

H. SCOTLAND (Miss),
"Lilybank," Southburn Rd.,
Airdrie.

DIARY

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

at S.W. Theatre

Dec. 30: **LES SYLPHIDES**,
BLOOD WEDDING,
BEAUTY & THE BEAST,
FACADE.

Jan. 1: **CARTE BLANCHE**,
HAUNTED BALLROOM,
PINEAPPLE POLL.

Jan. 2 (mat.): **COPPELIA**.

Jan. 6: **RAKE'S PROGRESS**,
RENDEZVOUS,
PINEAPPLE POLL.

Jan. 9 (mat.): **FETE ETRANGE**,
CARTE BLANCHE,
BEAUTY & THE BEAST,
FACADE.

Jan. 14: **COPPELIA**.

Jan. 16 (mat.): **SYLPHIDES**,
VALES NOBLES,
PUERTA DE TIERRA,
ILE DES SIRENES,
PINEAPPLE POLL.

Jan. 19: **CARTE BLANCHE**,
RAKE'S PROGRESS,
BEAUTY & THE BEAST,
FACADE.

Jan. 21: **RENDEZVOUS**,
BLOOD WEDDING,
PINEAPPLE POLL.

Jan. 23 (mat.): **COPPELIA**.

OPERA

David Poole has done the choreography for Humperdinck's **HANSEL & GRETEL** which will be produced at S.W. Theatre on December 23, 30 (mat.), Jan. 2, 6 (mat.), 11, 23.

Is Chamber Ballet

The Answer?

—from page three

music—and creating inside these. Several young composers are well able to write small orchestra scores. A number of choreographers could be interested in chamber performance if assured that these groups would not overshadow their work by staging half-done classical *pas de deux*. Certainly there are scenic artists in abundance who could fit well into the chamber group's decor needs.

Would such chamber ballets help British ballet as a whole? Yes. In this country all ballet roads lead to London with no inbetween creative centres. No art can take firm grip on a people if it exists only in the expensive theatres of that country's metropolises.

ELVIN

— from page 13



She remembers the long summer holidays spent in the sunshine of the Black Sea coast with its abundance of exotic fruit and flowers; and the excitement of the annual school performance when Ulanova Semonova might be "in front." She also remembers her first dancing role, at the age of ten, on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre. She was one of the Amouchiki—little winged cupids in silver wigs and pink draperies that appear in the Vision Scene of DON QUIXOTE and had a whole dance to perform as leader of the enchanting flock, the tiniest pupils in the School. When she graduated she was one of the three girls and four boys chosen for her year to stay the course.

All that seem a long time ago. War, the ballerina roles, marriage, and her arrival in this country came in the years between As Violetta talks she moves her hands with quiet, expressive gestures and she creates an atmosphere of tranquility. Her English is fluent and dextensive. Gone are the days when, in her first season at Covent Garden, she gazed ruefully at a limp, blue tutu—after dancing the Blue Bird pas de deux—and remarked, "It has not enough iron in it." But there is still the attractive accent with its soft, caressing note, and the piquancy of an unusual word or turn of phrase. The dark eyes now have an enigmatic expression, and the pale, oval face is framed in a smooth veil of blue-black hair, but beneath the exotic exterior is a warm and friendly personality, a generous nature, and the almost child-like simplicity of the true artist.

NEW DEPTH

Since joining the Sadler's Wells Ballet, Violetta Elvin, as she became, has danced most of the leading roles in the repertoire, and gained in strength and characterisation; in the last two years her art has acquired new depth and understanding. The Russian temperament and training are best suited to gradual development, and the full flowering of her gifts is still before her.

As a member of the Company, Violetta Elvin completes a cycle in its history. Alicia Markova, the first ballerina, chose a Russian name because the public was not interested in our dancers. Since those days the Wells has won international fame and a Russian ballerina is proud to take an English name.

Cinedance As I See It

● FILM PRODUCER DERRICK KNIGHT
WRITES A CONTROVERSIAL FEATURE
ON BALLET AND THE CINEMA IN THE
FEBRUARY ISSUE OF

Ballet Today

ANTONIO RETURNS

ANTONIO could easily be called the "God of the Spanish Dance," so it is small wonder that his company of dancers, singers and musicians are playing to crowded houses; but I feel that his new partner Rosita Segovia is an inadequate substitute for Rosario who was the perfect complement of Antonio, so perfect in fact, that her presence was often overlooked!

I am not altogether happy about this introduction of ballet into typical Spanish dancing, it presents something of an anachronism, and apart from the fact that they are two entirely different dance forms, ballet and Spanish dancing are opposing elements which cannot be mixed, so for that reason that part of the programme containing the ballet sequences was futile and pointless and did not show Antonio to best advantage, whilst Rosita Segovia's ballet is unfortunately only up to classroom standard.

But in Flora Albacin, the Flamenco dancer of the company, Antonio has found the perfect outlet for his sudden improvisations during a performance, for Albacin not only improvises herself but is capable of anticipating Antonio's every move and responding suitably.

In the veritable Spanish dances such as the "Segurillas," "Soleares" and "Fandangos" the whole company reached supreme heights and in his "Zapateado" Antonio clearly demonstrated the strength and artistry for which he is famed.

The most outstanding item was the "Martinete" which is one of the oldest and most primitive of all Spanish dances and to which there exists no musical accompaniment except the striking of a hammer against a flint; each beat being equivalent to a bar of music.

Antonio himself was responsible not only for the entire choreography but for the decor and costume designs, and he is in truth a genius who has shown the world the deep psychological significance of the Spanish dance fraught with a mixture of realism, symbolism and exhibitionism which is typical of the Spanish character.

THIS month's list of records is most attractive and there is something for every taste. Those lucky people with Christmas gift tokens, will have no difficulty in making their selection.

GRADUATION BALL (J. Strauss). New Symphony Orch. (Fistoulari). Decca LXT 2848.

What could be more delightful for this season of youthful parties, than this enchanting record consisting almost entirely of unpublished works of Johann Strauss. No doubt those who saw the Danish Ballet's gay, light-hearted performances last summer, will find additional enjoyment but it is a record for everyone with a young heart. Congratulations to all concerned—if it's not a best seller I've lost my shirt!

BILLY THE KIDD (Copland) (Wm. Schuman). Ballet Theatre Orchestra (Levine). Capitol CTL 7040.

Eugene Loring's *BILLY THE KIDD* is probably the most national of all American ballets and certainly the best of this generation. Its score, which bristles with cowboy folk tunes, paints each scene of the Western Drama with vivid colours. Schuman is equally descriptive in his slightly more "modern" approach—you realise, when watching this sordid ballet, *UNDERTOW*, how well he has collaborated with its choreographer, Tudor. Levine conducts both sides well. Recording and surface good.

GISELLE (Adam). Paris Opera Orchestra (Blareau). Decca LXT 2844.

There is a slight difference between this charming Paris version and our own—I wonder if it is nearer the original? Richard Blareau gives an excellent performance: there are cuts, but they have been so judiciously made that it may be considered as a complete recording. It gave

For Your 'Token' Buying —A Selection



me great pleasure as I sat in my armchair with my eyes closed, listening to this simple but expressive music, seeing my favourite Giselle dance again. Do not be without it.

DIABELLI VARIATIONS and EROICA VARIATIONS (Beethoven). Claude Arrau (piano). Brunswick AXTL 1024/5.

David Paltenghi set himself a difficult task when he chose the Diabelli Variations for his ballet, *PRISMATIC VARIATIONS*. The dancers represent the scintillating colours in a prism which necessitates a company of strong technique to match the brilliance of Beethoven's work. Here Arrau distinguishes himself in his masterly playing of this tour de force and this praise applies equally to the Eroica Variations. The piano tone can be criticized but I feel that would be carping—surface excellent.

QUARTET IN D MINOR—Death and the Maiden (Schubert). Amadeus String Quartet. HMV ALP 1088.

Marie Rambert once said that if Andrée Howard had composed only one ballet, *DEATH AND THE MAIDEN*, she would still deserve to be placed as one of the four most important English choreographers. certainly her choreography for this haunting and moving ballet was in every way worthy of the music chosen played with such delicacy and beauty of tone on this record. The team work of the four players will be held up as an example of their art. Recording and surface very good.

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY and IN A SUMMER GARDEN (Delius). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. (Beecham). Columbia 33C1017.

The Beecham Touch! And that goes for everything to do with this record—I cannot attempt to describe something so near perfection: the manner in which, under the master's hand, the summer garden and hills unfold in all their moods; the playing of the orchestra; and the meticulous care of those responsible for the recording. Tudor selected *Over the Hills* and four other works by Delius for his *ROMEO AND JULIET* which he created for Ballet Theatre, a work that contained some passages of great beauty.

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE (Rossini). Philharmonia Orchestra. (Galliera). Columbia 33S1009.

Surely this is the most enjoyable and appealing of all Massine's ballets—it is with such heart-felt satisfaction that one leaves the theatre knowing that those gay little can-can dancers will never be parted. Do you remember Moira Shearer's dancing of the short but difficult solo in the second scene? This attractive disc can certainly be recommended for its interpretation, recording and surface.

LES SYLPHIDES (Chopin) UIRAPURU (Villa Lobos). New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. (Kurtz). Columbia 33S1011.

One does not often hear Gretchaninov's orchestration of *LES SYLPHIDES*, which I found most interesting. It is a pity that the Mazurka (Op. 33 No. 2), danced by one of the premières danseuses, has been omitted so as to get it all onto one side but nevertheless it is a good recording and should please many. The Brazilian composer's symphonic poem on the reverse side, paints an Indian legend with vivid and exciting colours.

If your tokens cannot meet the other records, there are these "forty fives" of the ever-popular ballet and entr'acte music from *ROSAMUNDE* (HMV 7P144), the *SLEEPING BEAUTY* Waltz and the *PROCESSION OF THE SARDAR* (Col. SCD2024), *LES PATINEURS* (HMV.7P102), and *GAYANEH* (HMV.7P103), or else the *SLEEPING BEAUTY* Waltz and *GREEN-SLEEVES* on a standard record (Col.DX1889).

B.C.

Order back issues of Ballet Today, containing—

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★ Order (at 1/3, post free) from **BALLET TODAY**, 15, UPPER BRIGHTON ROAD, SURBITON, SURREY

is the decor for the early Stuart Court Masques. He was not, however, a slavish imitator and in most cases developed and improved upon what he had seen abroad. It was while Jones was in Venice that he received an invitation to visit King Christian in Denmark and was subsequently employed by him. When he was in Copenhagen, the Earl of Rutland arrived there bringing the Order of the Garter. King Christian from King James. This incident, coupled with the fact that King James had married Prin-

cess Anne, Christian's sister, adequately explains why Inigo Jones came to be employed at the English court. Jones and Jonson worked amicably in the presentation of masques for several years, but at a later period they quarrelled and in 1617 the dramatist, without any known justification told Prince Charles that if he wanted a word to express the greatest villain in the world in would be Inigo.

The first masque for which Inigo was responsible at Court was 'The Queen's Masque of Blackness', which

danced in it, when she and her eleven ladies appeared as Blacamoors. The dialogue of the Masque referred to the recent union of the thrones of England and Scotland. These masques were danced by members of the Court and many rehearsals, which were taken very seriously, were held.

QUEEN WAKE

This is evidenced by a letter written in 1608 by the Earl of Arundel to his father-in-law, the Earl of Shrewsbury, which apologised for his wife not having written and explained that she was very busy rehearsing for a masque which was about to be produced. Two years later Jones was responsible for the general decor for the Masque, 'Tethy' or 'The Queen Wake' which was notable for the fact the dancers included the Queen and her children, the Prince Charles (afterwards Charles the First) and his sister, Princess Elizabeth (afterwards the Queen of Bohemia). Inigo Jones continued to supply designs for the English Court Masques at intervals right up to the opening months of 1640.

He had, however, been appointed Surveyor of the King's Works, some twenty years previously. From that time his main employment was as the official State Architect and also as a private building consultant. His Swan Song in the theatre was as designer for the Court Masque, *Salomacia Spolia*, which was seen on January 21st, 1640, when King Charles the First and his Consort, Queen Henrietta Maria were among the dancers. The outbreak of the Civil War resulted in the cessation of Jones' activities both as a Masque designer and as an architect.

ROYALIST

He was a staunch Royalist, and, was first seen at Whitehall on Twelfth Night, 1605. It was commissioned by Queen Anne, who also being over seventy did not undertake any active military duties but in 1645 was made a prisoner when Cromwell captured Basing House. On account of his age Jones did recover his property, which had been sequestered by the Roundheads, but only after paying a fine of over a Thousand Pounds. Even then he was not a poor man but the conditions of life then existing were not very much to his liking and the execution of the King upset him greatly.

Jones passed to his long rest on June 21st, 1652, having attained an incredible age for the period. Every designer for the dance in all subsequent eras has been eternally in debt to Jones for the inspiration which he gave them.

Continental Profiles

TATJANA GSOVSKY is probably the best choreographer in Germany, and she recently celebrated her 25th school-anniversary in Berlin.

Born in Russia, she studied ballet in Petersburg, but her successes later were more in the western world, in Germany, Italy and South America.

In Germany she was ballet-mistress and choreographer at several theatres but always she returned to Berlin, her home and school. In the Fasanenstrasse 68, near the Kurfürstendamm, she educated and trained dancers, who became the elite of soloists at our theatres. Names like Natascha Trofimova (now in the position of Irene Sroik at the state opera Munich), Gisela Deege (soloist at the Staetische Oper, Berlin), Edel von Rothe (ballerina in Düsseldorf - Yvonne Georgi), Peter van Dijk and Maria Fris (Ballets de Janine Charrat), Sybil Werden (formerly soloist at the Stateopera, Berlin, now a film star), Gert Reinholm (her principal male dancer since her activity at the Stateopera, Berlin, who dances now in

TATJANA GSOVSKY

By Eva Bulow

Buenos Aires the title-role of Hamlet).

These are only a few of a long list—and a future generation is working under her guidance.

The choreographies after the war at the Stateopera Berlin by her were various. She created *Bolero* by Ravel, *Prometheus* by Beethoven, *Don Juan* by Gluck, *Daphnis and Chloe* by Ravel, *Nobilissima Visione* by Hindemith, *Petruschka* by Stravinsky, *Don Quichote* by Leo Spies, *L'Après midi d'un Faune*, *Goyescas* by Granados, *La Boutique Fantastique*, *The Lovers of Verona* by L. Spies, *La Valse* by Ravel, *The Arrow* by F. Walter, *Romeo and Juliet* by Prokofiev, and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

For the last two years she has had no engagement with a theatre and staged as guest choreographer during both years for the Festival month in Berlin. *Apollon Musagète* and *The Idiot* by Werner Henze, followed by Blacher's *Hamlet* and *Choreomusica* after a Mozart divertimento were by her this year.

Also she choreographed the world premiere of *The Nightingale* by W. Egk in connection with Juan von Zarissa by the same composer at the Munich Stateopera, *Trionfo di Afrodite* by Orff at the Scala, Milan, and a series of dance sequences for films.

She was married to Victor Gsovsky, but is now divorced. Her daughter, Llena Gsovsky, has a ballet studio in Paris. She received the "Prize of Kritik" in gratitude for her choreographies at the Festival month.



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THEATRE ARTS BALLET

Reviewed by

A. V. COTON

and **SUSAN LESTER**

THIS newly-formed company consists of a number of dancers who have worked regularly in the T.V. feature "Ballet for Beginners," and the main item of the programmes is a flesh-and-blood version of the analytical lecture so frequently given over the air by Felicity Gray.

The "coré" of the group consists of young talents of the Cone School who provide, as it were, framework and corps-de-ballet for the more mature dancers. The lecture-demonstration shows the main features of barre work, explains the use of the special foot, arm and head positions, and opens the way for the leading dancers to illustrate Miss Gray's points through various classical variations and pas-de-deux.

LES SYLPHIDES and a new work by Jack Carter, ADELIN PLUNKETT IN PARIS, form the rest of one programme.

These performances are given on such stages as are available in city halls, assembly rooms, etc., and the idea of such a company presenting what purports to be an "explanatory" show of dancing is a good one: its major fault lies in the analytical lecture.

Miss Gray, though trying to "keep things simple," assumes far too great an existing knowledge of ballet amongst her audience.

Demonstrating "classical mime" — very effectively — she fails to distinguish it from other kinds of mime and also refers to many of the conventions of classical ballet without first giving a definition and explanation of this kind of theatre dance.

Probably quite unconsciously, she seems to assume that her audiences consist of people already thoroughly familiar with the T.V. series of "Ballet for Beginners."

Jack Carter's work, strongly reminiscent of Tudor's GALA PERFORMANCE, shows La Plunkett appearing as guest star at a foreign Opera-Ballet; there are some neat and some amusing entrées and a certain amount of really invented choreography. Its period Gounod music is nicely in accord and Norman McDowell's costumes are delicious and eminently balletic both in pattern and

To page 23

Diaghilev before him, is in danger of creating aickle audience, drawn by the SUCCESS DE CANDALED and shock technique when the big drum ceases to beat, the crowd melts away. Is there a future for ballet in that? And so the book leaves one with a question, with food for argument and for thought.

VIOLETTA ELVIN. *Dancers of the Day No. 3.*
Edited by Hugh Fisher (A. and C. Black, 6/-).

A record of Violetta Elvin's roles in ballet since her arrival in England, illustrated by many excellent photographs.

FESTIVAL BALLET: *Dancers of the Day No. 4.*
Edited by Hugh Fisher (A. and C. Black, 6/-).

An illustrated record of Festival Ballet and its dancers, past and present, including some of the celebrated dancers who have appeared with the company as guest artists.

BEGINNERS, PLEASE! *Kay Ambrose (A. and C. Black, 6/-).*

This wise, informative and good-humoured little book should prove popular among ballet students who—and I hope there are not many—have to work at home and without a teacher. It will also instruct the ballet-goer who—and I hope there are many—would like to know something of what goes to make a pirouette or entrechat. It begins with exercises at the barre and then describes and illustrates in detail the first steps in ballet. The numerous drawings are full of life and models of clarity. Kay Ambrose, who is responsible for both text and drawings, is the author of two successful ballet pocket books of this type. Her collaborator is Felia Franca, artistic director of the National Ballet Company of Canada, who will be remembered for her distinguished work with the Sadler's Wells Ballet before it came to Covent Garden.

THE BALLET ANNUAL, 1954. *Edited by Arnold Haskell (A. and C. Black, 21/-).*

Here is a Ballet Annual once again—in turquoise-blue jacket, with plum coloured end-papers reflecting the theme of Princess Aurora and coronets for the Coronation year. The value of this record of the world of ballet for the twelve months preceding 1st July, 1953 is now increased by the inclusion of an Index, and a comprehensive Index covering the first seven issues is in preparation.

P.C.

© This magnificent shot of the finale from **HOMAGE** is published in **BALLET ANNUAL** (A. & C. Black) which is reviewed in this issue.

In the February

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THE SCHOOL OF
BRITISH DANCE THEATRE



© Another photograph of Rosario Hudson figures mentioned on page seven

THE RUSSIANS

—from page four

The group of dancers was counted by folk-dancers. Galya Izmailova, a vivacious ballerina of the Tashkent Ballet who appeared in the Soviet UZBECK DANCES in a very poor propaganda piece. Here, on stage, she danced for more effect, especially in the oriental stylings of one of her dances.

The other folk performers were three boys—Andrei Klimov, Pyotr Prokin and Vladimir Shubarin, who danced incredible variants of the gopak, heel-kicking number we are accustomed to . . . but with unusual speed and composure.

Naturally my attention was focussed mostly on Shelest and her partner who were my first real experience of what Soviet schooling is currently producing. Even under the totally bad conditions (bad stage, no decor or even drapes, a piano as accompaniment) it was clear that the Soviet Union is producing dancers of the very highest technical and stageworthy efficiency.

We are used to hearing of their "fabulous technique." In the past we may even have said "h, yes, but technique isn't everything." In these perform-

ances I was convinced that the Soviet dancers knew quite well the limitations of mere technique.

EXTRAORDINARY

Not only is their technique and physical stamina extraordinary dimension; their acting, continuity (no blanks — preparatory pauses every time, as it should be) stage presence and grip are superb.

The ESMERELDA variation of Konstantin Shatilov was enough to astound me. Grande jete coming down on the inside of one knee and sliding on beat, up in pirouette

. . . repeated three times round the stage to left-down corner then two grande jete to centre stage, down and up in eight pirouettes.

Such technique . . . such dancing . . . proves that not only has Russia sustained her tradition of great teaching but — even without the Diaghilev-Fokine influence — has moved forward to more contemporary stylism.

The most important dance performance seen in the West since the Rabovsky/Kovach introduction to new Soviet-Hungarian techniques.

Theatre Arts Ballet — from page twenty

shape; they constitute his best suite of costume designs to date. Domini Callaghan, Margarita Tate, Josephine Gordon assisted by Michel de Lutry, Denys Palmer, and Malcolm Goddard sustain the main burdens in all the ballets, both new and old.

A. V. COTON

HILTON WORK

In the second programme, the new ballet was YOU HAD A FRIEND, an essay in free dance style by Wendy Hilton. Its very short story tells of a boy puzzled by the different appeals of two women friends to whom he is emotionally drawn.

The ballet opens with a short prelude spoken from back-stage, which is intended to suggest the

tension between the characters as the ballet opens.

In its short duration, this minor incident is fairly adequately expressed through the choreography, but the novel style of movement demanded very close attention.

It is both pleasant and interesting to see experimental work of this kind; one would ask at this point whether Miss Hilton employed the spoken prelude to facilitate our understanding of the situation because of the non-classic style of dancing? Or did she use it to emphasise and accelerate the situation, assuming our comprehension?

Sensitive performances were given by Margarita Tate, Susan Richter and Denys Palmer.

SUSAN LESTER

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